

Democratic politics should be about the needs of voters, not the vanities of the media and politicians

In France many demonstrators have taken to the streets for the last six months to protest against taxes which are too high, government which impedes their lives, and politicians who are out of touch with the mood.

In Hong Kong hundred of thousands have peacefully demonstrated against a government which wants to remove their freedoms and place them more firmly under Chinese control in ways they fear.

In the UK voters resoundingly rejected the two main political parties in the recent European elections for their collective failure to implement the decision of the EU referendum.

All across the continent of Europe traditional centre right and centre left parties have been voted out of office for their failure to put the prosperity and welfare of people above the demands of the EU scheme.

The response of the out of sympathy elites in each case is different. In Hong Kong it is likely the authorities will ignore the views of voters and will seek to find ways of suppressing the protests. The damage done to the Legislative Council building provides a reason the authorities will use to clamp down, in reprisals that may go beyond just the few who did physical damage to the place. In France the President says he is listening and makes a few token gestures over taxes, but drives on with the same old agenda despite the reversals. In the UK the ruling party is trying to change leader and find one who will implement the wishes of the people with many members of the Conservative party conscious that it has no right to political success if it fails to do the people's bidding. In Italy Lega and Cinque Stelle strain at the leash of unpopular Euro and EU rules but so far have declined to break out.

Tomorrow I will look at what happens when the populists get into power. Are they absorbed and turned into establishment clones, or can they assert their different agenda? Does the agenda work?